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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

38TH YEAR

JULY 17, 1978

PROFILE ON -

Women in Agriculture

Prostaglandins are often referred to as the "new family of wonder drugs," according to Dr. Norberta Schoene, a research scientist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Institute in Beltsville, Md. Her special interest in prostaglandins--sometimes called simply pg's--began early in her scientific career.

First investigated in the early 1930's, prostaglandins (pros-ta-glan-dins) are isolated hormone-like substances that show much clinical promise. They affect a wide range of physiological processes, from the contraction of the uterus to secretion from the stomach wall. They're usually found in body tissues in minute amounts. There are different "pg" variants in different tissues. The body makes them from essential unsaturated fatty acids taken in the diet.

"Pg's" were originally found from human and sheep seminal fluid but more recently were found in marine coral. They're also produced by chemical synthesis. "Pg's" have many uses but the only "pg" presently authorized by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the United States is one that is being used to hasten labor and to terminate pregnancy.

Kansas born Norberta Schoene graduated from Kansas State and went to graduate school at George Washington University where she worked with lipid metabolism. Her interest in the metabolic pathways of essential fatty acids led her into the research on prostaglandins and blood pressure and their possible relation to the American diet and strokes.

Now in her seventh year with the Department of Agriculture's Science and Education Administration, she is involved with the Human research study on low-fat diets and blood pressure.



Dr. Norberta Schoene is shown in the Nutrition Institute Laboratory at Beltsville, Md.

Total food expenditures by the American consumer rose from nearly \$59 billion in 1954 to about \$219 billion in 1977, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture economists.

FOOD CLIPS

Onions need good circulation of air. Store them in loosely woven or open-meshed containers suggest USDA home economists.

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Tomatoes may be stored uncovered in the refrigerator. Unripe tomatoes should be kept away from direct sunlight because too much sunlight prevents development of an even color.

ABOUT YOU 'N' ME

A series of videotapes on Women in Newspaper Management has been compiled by the School of Journalism at Indiana University under a grant from the Gannett Newspaper Foundation. Project director Christine Ogan (812-337-9247) has details on obtaining the materials for showing in your office, or meeting place.. "Herring-- as you like it," a new publication with "kitchen-tested" recipes from the National Marine Fisheries Service is now available from the NOAA at the U.S. Dept. of Commerce....The sixth annual Food and Health Writers' Conference has been scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 16th in the Washington, D.C. area. Theme of the meeting will be "Food Facts and Nutri-Lore," dealing with common nutrition misconceptions, according to the Dairy Council of Greater Metropolitan Washington.

"TURKEY HAM"

In an effort to clarify the composition of turkey ham, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has offered a proposal to require qualifying statements on that meat's package label. Actual meat contents, curing agents, flavorings and seasonings that may be used in making turkey ham would be defined, according to the proposal.

"Turkey ham" is a popular cured poultry product that has been sold in the marketplace since 1975. It is fabricated from turkey thigh meat, and then cured. No portion of this meat is made from pork.

Suggestions for label changes include 1) only boneless turkey thigh meat, with the skin and surface fat removed, could be used in fabricating the product, and, 2) the name would be qualified to read "cured turkey thigh meat."

For a copy of the formal proposal, write to: Irwin Fried, Acting Director, Product Standards, Labels and Packaging Division, FSQS, Room 202 Annex Building, Washington, D.C. 20250, or phone 202-447-6042. Comments should be sent before August 31 to: Hearing Clerk, USDA, Room 1077-S, Washington, D.C. 20250.

SAVING CALORIES?

If you use chocolate chips instead of chopped nuts you can lower the "calorie count" in cookies.